



## Over \$1.5 Million Pledged to Secure the Future of Acacia Illinois

We are pleased to report that as of March 20, 2009, over 200 Acacia alumni and friends have pledged over \$1.5 million to the *Acacia Illinois Securing the Future Campaign*. Of this amount, approximately \$500,000 has been collected to date (approximately 96% of billed amounts). These funds have been invested in conservative assets with the goal of preserving the principal.

The fact that we have been able to raise approximately 87% of our \$1.75 million goal thus far is remarkable given the short time that the Capital Campaign has been in existence and also taking into account both the current difficult economic environment and the deteriorating stock markets. In the face of these difficult economic times and personal financial sacrifices, Acacia brothers have nevertheless stepped forward to support our efforts to find a permanent home for our fraternity.

As many of you are aware, since 1991, Acacia at the University of Illinois has been forced to lease temporary housing. We have had no permanent home to call our own. In 2005, the Acacia Board of Directors obtained a four-year lease (subsequently extended) and moved into the unoccupied SAE house at 211 East Daniel. While this home has exceeded all anticipated expectations, from the onset of the move, we knew it was only a temporary fix for the Chapter. Sigma Alpha Epsilon remains determined to recolonize their chapter, and we must move out by the Fall 2010. Though we are taking the necessary measures to ensure Acacia Illinois is not without a Chapter home at that time, further planning and action is required to secure permanent housing.

At this point, considerable time and energy is being expended by the Board of Directors pursuing all housing alternatives. Board member **Mike Duncan '74**, is leading the real estate search efforts on behalf of the Board and has conducted due diligence

on several potential building purchase opportunities. However, to date, none of these opportunities have been deemed to be acceptable for either structural or financial reasons. The Board remains optimistic that a solid acquisition opportunity will become available as fraternities and sororities begin



to be required to comply with the new local fire sprinkling ordinance, requiring meaningful capital expenditures. Having \$500,000 of cash in hand along with \$1 million in committed pledges gives our Board a strong position in negotiating a favorable real estate acquisition from an organization that may not be able to comply with the new housing requirements.

We continue to ask for support from those alumni that have not yet participated in the Capital Campaign. We recognize that for some alumni, seeing an actual rendering of a new house or the Board's purchase of a specific property is important to their participation in the Capital Campaign. We

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### Chapter Adviser's Report

By Joe Scavuzzo '05

Good Brothers of the past and the present, I am sincerely enthused to find myself in my present position. Acting as a chapter adviser to the Acacia Illinois Chapter, I can claim first-hand witness to several remarkable happenings taking place in Champaign. Just as the Corporation Board had hoped, the active chapter was invigorated by our most recent win of the Malcolm Award. Rather than allowing complacency into the halls of Acacia, the active chapter has utilized this momentous success as a new benchmark to strive toward over the coming months and years.

Ever mindful of the oath taken upon activation, community service has been a major focus for the active leadership over the past few months. Drawing upon the foundation set in place by the Acacia Illinois strategic plan, "Realizing Our Potential", the active membership has identified philanthropy as a key area which needs

improvement. Significant and noteworthy strides are currently being taken in order to ensure Acacia Illinois' name is synonymous with giving back on the UIUC campus and in the greater Champaign/Urbana metropolitan area.

Rather than focus solely on monetary collections or volunteering man hours, Acacia Illinois has developed a philanthropy strategy encompassing several facets. So far this academic year, Acacia Illinois has logged approximately 498 man hours of voluntary community service – ranking Acacia 11th out of the 46 fraternities belonging to the IFC. We are currently on track to log the most service hours our chapter has seen in nine years.

In conjunction with this, the current philanthropy chair, **Patrick Couture '07**, is coordinating a food drive with the women of

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# Updates from the Undergraduate Chapter

## New Members for Spring 2009

By Mike Frumm '07, Head Pledge Educator

Six freshmen are pledging our chapter this semester. We are about a month into the pledgship and the pledges are all doing extremely well. Two pledges reside from Lindenhurst, IL: **Brett Scheffler** and **Kyle Gallagher**; one from Mount Prospect, IL: **Collin Burdick**; one from La Jolla, CA: **Lucas Barra**; one from Highland Park, IL: **Dylan Carrigan**; and one from Chicago, IL: **Wyatt Harris**. Harris is the only pledge having declared a major thus far and has decided to study Speech and Hearing Science.

Several other men are considering pledging Acacia. These men are exploring their options before making anything official. The pledges are quickly getting to know all of the active members in the house and are in the process of learning the Acacia ways. The house is really trying to help these freshmen adjust to college life by stressing the importance of time management and how there needs to be a balance between school and recreational time.

Pledge educators have implemented a 'study hours' system where pledges are required to go to the library a few nights each week in order to stay on top of their studies. All pledges were presented with the option of being socially active and five decided to do so. By being socially active, the pledges are meeting a lot of new sorority women and are building their social networks. The six pledges are all great men and the chapter is anticipating they will eventually become contributing members to Acacia.

## Philanthropy

By Pat Couture '07, Philanthropy Chair



Throughout the course of the past semester, Acacia fraternity refocused the goals of the chapter to more properly serve the community.

At the start the Fall term, Acacia committed to volunteer on a weekly basis at Circle of Friends Adult Day Center in Champaign-Urbana. Over the course of the Fall semester, Acacia men dedicated themselves to serve the elderly

and mentally infirm of the local community. The men of Acacia have maintained this relationship with Circle of Friends Adult Day Center and are continuing to volunteer into the current Spring semester, doubling the amount of time they served the prior weeks.

In addition to the commitment at Circle of Friends, Acacia also pledged to volunteer at the local Champaign community Salvation Army Center. Every week, Acacia members visit the Salvation Army Headquarters and do whatever necessary to assist the staff of the Salvation Army.

In terms of philanthropic events, Acacia hosted two events in the Fall semester. The annual Acacia Bowl, a football tournament for charity, was a tremendous success. Six other larger fraternities and sororities attended. The second philanthropy, Acacia Claus, is quickly becoming the biggest and most influential philanthropy event of the Fall semester. Over 300 toys were collected and donated through our efforts to Toy for Tots. As the Spring semester begins, Acacia is extremely optimistic for the future of its philanthropy efforts and results.

Currently, a food drive to benefit the Eastern Illinois Food Bank is in progress. So far, over \$500 in canned food has been raised for this cause. Every member of Acacia is extremely excited for the future of Acacia service and philanthropy.

## Intramurals

By Casey Savatski '07, Intramural Chair



Acacia's 2009 Intramural basketball team is off to a terrific start.

Our team at the moment has a 2-1 record with 1 game still to go. In the first game, we convincingly beat

the Delts 45-32 behind **Aaron Mechling '07** and **Casey Savatski '07**. In the second game, we destroyed Alpha Delta Rho by the slaughter rule, which is winning by 15 points with two minutes left. The scoring in this game was led by captain **Michael Spires '07** who had 25 points.

Unfortunately, in our third game we suffered an agonizing defeat to Sigma Chi. While we were only down by two at halftime, they increased the pace in the

second half. We were not able to keep up and they were able to pull away. Our last game is against Delta Upsilon and if we win that game there is a good chance we will be in the playoffs.

## Spring Social Calendar

By Scott Staiton '07, Social Chair

Our chapter this semester is participating in one of the best social calendars in years. Acacia's positive relationships with the sororities on this campus have led to the ability to host exchanges with every house we ask. As a result, we are fortunate to have large, off-campus events planned with Kappa Alpha Theta, Delta Delta Delta, Chi Omega, Delta Gamma and Gamma Phi Beta. We also have smaller, on-campus events planned with Alpha Chi Omega, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Alpha Phi and Kappa Delta.

Events this semester range from ice skating with Alpha Chi Omega in early March to a barn dance with Gamma Phi Beta in April. These exchanges allow us to strengthen the ties we have formed with our brothers as well as create new ones with the sororities we have the privilege of hosting.

## Report from the Venerable Dean

By Matt Schild '07, Venerable Dean



Acacia Illinois is off to another excellent semester. Rush has gone very well and our new member education process is underway. Operationally, we are really working to

make sure everything in the house runs smoothly as a place of residence. Some improvements over the last couple of months include the purchase of a George Foreman grill, increased vegetables in our salad bar and an orange juice dispenser. Our movie nights at the house are also greatly improved thanks to the popcorn machine that our chef gave us for Christmas.

Finally, with intramurals, social events and other extracurricular activities in full swing, our members are really cracking down on the library time in order to ensure our grades can set us apart in this tough job market.

## Focus on an Active Chapter Member

By Alex Chiang '08 – New Initiate



Alex Chiang '08 and friend.

My name is **Alex Chiang '08** and I am a new initiate of Acacia Illinois. Throughout my fraternal experience, which is still at its beginning stages, I have learned a lot about myself and the opportunities Acacia can provide for me. This experience has been one of the most rewarding in my life and I am eager to see where these next few years take me as a young man, as a student, and as an Acacian.

I am one of the few out-of-state students here at U of I. I was born and raised in North Potomac, Maryland and I must say I am very happy with my decision to come study in the Midwest. I am a finance major in the business school. The reputation of the business school along with the overall reputation of the University played a large role in my decision to attend school here.

This spring break, I am going to China to visit family and to set up a study abroad venture for my junior year. I have met with my advisor about this and feel my interests in business lie overseas. My uncle owns a publicly traded manufacturing firm in Hong Kong and my goal is to be able to intern in Hong Kong with either my uncle's company or a consulting firm during the summer before my senior year. I want to be able to learn more about China during my spring break visit and even more about it during my study abroad trip. With China's emerging economy, I want to be able to utilize my ability to speak the language, my soon to be acquired knowledge of China and my knowledge of the United States to do business domestically as well as in the Far East.

## Focusing on the Alumni

*Editor's note: Choosing alumni on whom to focus attention in **The Hello** is a random process. Since inaugurating this series, your editors have found it sometimes takes a bit of brotherly cajoling to get our candidate to agree that their story is worth summarizing and that recollections can help bring back memories of college days for others as well. To date, our requests for participation have been met with success, though we acknowledge that each issue's candidate has required our very best convincing. So here is the updated insight on...*

### Ron Maurer '56

Only a relatively few Acacia alumni have had the good fortune experienced by **Ron Maurer '56** who, after college and the U.S. Navy, was able to return to the home in which he was raised to earn a living thereafter right in his home community. In Ron's case, that was Delavan, Illinois where he has been engaged in farming ever since his release from the Naval Security Group (the USN "spook group") operating for the majority of his naval career on Okinawa collecting information.

Having been raised on the farm in Delavan, Ron decided to attend the U of I and major in agriculture. However, it was not until he was in college that he made the decision that he would like to make farming his career. During Ron's freshman year he met a college coed named Carol while participating in a bowling league. The couple dated throughout college and ultimately got married after graduating.

While in school, Ron participated in the U of I Men's Glee club along with numerous house activities. To his dismay, he discontinued playing the saxophone while in college, but did pick up the skill again later in life, playing regularly in a Shrine Brass Band. He has been a member of his local Hopedale Masonic lodge for over 40 years and is a member of the Peoria Scottish Rite and Mohamed Shrine.

Among his unique memories of college was the opportunity to be delivered to class via an army tank! It seems that Ron purchased a chance during "Stunt Show" (remember those held in the Armory each spring with fraternities and sororities jointly participating in the carnival like atmosphere?). Ron had the winning ticket but after hearing the concern from his future wife, Carol, Ron decided not to take the ride. Conclusion: never underestimate the impact of your girlfriend's advice.

Still other favorite memories include dances at Huff Gym, the annual Plowboy Prom, Big name bands playing at Huff Gym, Illini Union dances and particularly the fraternity and sorority "party hops".



Asked what he considered to be among the strongest assets or benefits he received that carried over to post college life, Ron quickly responded: "Being able to adjust rapidly and comfortably to unique or unusual social circumstances and being able to step forward in situations that might otherwise cause a person to hold back." He credits his pledge training and the subsequent chapter practices that allowed him to achieve such confidence. Of only slightly lesser importance, and although he thought he had been trained well at home, was his mastery of good table manners (except for Friday night dinners of course). Those issues are probably ones which most Acacians will agree were definitely a benefit to them as well. Still, while in a speculative mood, Ron wondered how many Acacians might remember "Methyl Blue?"

Fast forward several years and Ron and Carol remain on the original farm where Ron was raised and remain active farmers today where they grow corn and soybeans. They are the parents of two children, David and Dianne (both U of I graduates) and also have four grandchildren, a daughter-in-law and a son-in-law.

While the children were being raised, Ron and Carol decided to "see the world". Not only did they cover the country coast to coast and border to border numerous times each year over a ten year period, but they served as willing "tour guides" to other Americans who did not want to venture forth alone.

Ron has observed that the experiences of those trips could fill more than a book as they helped address the needs of fellow travelers AND those same travelers sometimes problematical idiosyncrasies.

In summary, Ron noted that among the greater benefits he has enjoyed as the result of being a member of Acacia is the on-going life-long relationships he has established with many brothers across the country. He concluded his comments during this interview by saying, "Acacia made a very big University seem small."

## Treasurer's Report

By Skip Heaver '01

For fiscal year 2008-2009, we planned for a decrease in corporate net worth by approximately 12% due primarily to the engagement of Omega Financial for our Capital Campaign management and consultation, and secondarily to lower interest rates on deposits. As the fiscal year comes to a close (June 2009), we expect to be in line with our target.

Since the publication of our last Hello, we received the completed audit report for the 2007-2008 fiscal year, complete with praise and constructive advice from Clifton Gunderson. All matters were addressed by our Corporation and Chapter Liaison Treasurers.

Managing, monitoring and protecting our assets are of paramount importance; and our now yearly audits provide an

additional level of review, transparency and accounting. Notably, every dollar held by the Corporation – whether from our corpus or obtained through the capital campaign – is backed by the FDIC or SIPC, insulating our finances from any possible failure by our financial institutions.

Finally, I would like to thank **Dennis Bone '02** for all of his hard work and assistance in both corporate and chapter financial affairs.

Should anyone have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [skipheaver@yahoo.com](mailto:skipheaver@yahoo.com).



### Visit the Acacia Website

Visit [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), the official alumni website, to:

- Learn more about the chapter
- Search for alumni
- Update your address, phone number and e-mail address
- Find out about upcoming events
- Post noteworthy accomplishments (a new baby, a recent marriage, a recent promotion, etc.)
- Support the fraternity's capital campaign

## Chapter Adviser's Report

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Alpha Chi Omega, with the goal of raising \$5,000 cash or the food equivalent. In order to accomplish this goal, Patrick has members in place to collect non-perishables/cash from participating chapters; commonly being referred to as the "\$5 or 5 Cans Campaign." Also, discussions to involve university professors with this drive have begun as well. Patrick is hoping to negotiate with several professors of popular campus-wide classes in order to give a small amount of extra credit in exchange for donations. Admittedly a lofty aim, Patrick will settle with professors agreeing to place collection baskets within lecture hall vestibules. Finally, the chapter has assembled a door-to-door task force to connect with the Champaign/Urbana community. Several members have volunteered to campaign door-to-door within the residential community to spread the word about this drive.

Acacia Illinois is excelling in several other areas – including campus involvement. Senior **Robbie Keller '06** will soon end his term on the Student Senate. Taking on many active roles and immersing himself into the Student Senate, Robbie has sparked interest in a few younger members to take on campus-wide leadership roles. Following in Robbie's footsteps, Junior **Max Molloy**

'07 successfully ran for Robbie's vacant Student Senate seat in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Junior **Matt Fitterer '07** comfortably won the election for a spot on the Student Organization Resource Fee (S.O.R.F.) Board. The S.O.R.F. board consists of thirteen members: eight students elected annually at a campus-wide election, three faculty/staff, one ex-officio member from the U of I accounting staff and an ex-officio member appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. This board is responsible for the appropriation of a significant amount of student tuition to different University programs. Please join me in congratulating Max and Matt on their nice wins for both themselves and the active chapter.

Changing gears a little bit, I would like to welcome 27 newly minted members into the Acacia Illinois brotherhood. These young gentlemen pledged during the Fall 2008 semester and were initiated during the first full week of January. Building on the achievements of Fall rush, the active chapter also had a successful Spring rush. We currently have six Spring 2009 new members. Rush strategies set in place over the recent years are truly paying dividends today and the future of our chapter in the hands of these young members looks as bright as ever. Kudos to the current Rush Chairs and Pledge Educators.

On a final note, I would like to share with all alumni that the Corporation Board is striving to keep an open line of communication with the current Executive Board and active chapter at all times. In keeping with this ideal set forth in our strategic plan mentioned earlier, several board members, myself included, traveled to Champaign on January 26th. We met with the Executive Board and entire active chapter to discuss, among other things, the Capital Campaign and the active chapter's current strategic focus. Along with this, Brother **Phil Chapman '71** is consistently facilitating regular round table discussions between alumni, new initiates and active members. Over breakfast, these round table discussions address any and all issues ranging from the active chapter grade point average to campus sporting events. Brother Chapman is consistently receiving positive feedback from the active chapter regarding these meetings. Please feel free to contact me at [joseph.m.scavuzzo@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.m.scavuzzo@gmail.com) or Brother **Phil Chapman '71** at [pchapman@highlandil.com](mailto:pchapman@highlandil.com) should you feel the call to, once again, serve Acacia Illinois.

I truly hope this correspondence finds all my Good Brothers and their loved ones in good health and in great spirits.

## Harrison Pappas '05 Researches Acacia History



**Harrison Pappas '05** has been working hard to uncover some lost pictures of former Acacia homes at Illinois. Harrison heard from a friend about the University library's photo archive. He spent time looking through the archives and came across several photos of the old house(s). One of the three pictures he discovered is published here.

Harrison is finishing his thesis for his M.S. in Nuclear Engineering this summer. He will be attending U of I again in the fall to start his MBA. He's looking to take some time off this summer after finishing his thesis, spending his time in Cape Cod, Champaign and throughout Chicagoland with his pledge brothers.



**Original Acacia Fraternity house at 505 East Green Street at the time of founding April 28, 1906. Photo courtesy of University of Illinois Archives.**

### Obituaries

#### Albert Scharf '41

**Albert Scharf '41**, 87, of Scottsdale, Arizona passed away on December 11, 2008. He received his Doctorate in Education from Arizona State University. His career focused on mentoring, teaching and coaching high school and college students. He was an advocate for children with mental and physical disabilities and was instrumental in passing Arizona state legislation to obtain equal education for all children. He ended his career counseling the Arizona Dept. of Public Safety police force. He loved sports and excelled at many including swimming, tennis and golf. He wrestled and pitched baseball while at

University of Illinois. He will be truly missed by wife, Phyllis Sue, daughters; Becky and Kerrie, grandchildren; Amy (husband Jon & son Jarrod), Libby, Ryan and Sara. Memorial service was held Friday, January 16, 2009 at Paradise Valley United Methodist Church, Paradise Valley, Arizona. Albert was a 1941 initiate of Acacia Illinois.

#### Dick Ewan '54

Brother **Dick Ewan '54** passed away on October 30th from a heart attack. Dick was a retired Animal Science Professor at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Dick was a 1954 initiate of Acacia Illinois.

#### \$1.5 Million Pledged

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look forward to sharing this information with you as events unfold during 2009. We are grateful to those 209 alumni that have given us their vote of confidence thus far – giving us a strong hand in negotiating the best opportunity for securing a permanent home for Acacia Fraternity at the University of Illinois.

If you have not yet made a donation to the campaign, you may do so on our website at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com) or by contacting one of the co-chairmen at: **Michael Duncan '74**, [mduncan@patcap.com](mailto:mduncan@patcap.com), (312) 953-9403 or **Dan Bayston '80**, [dan.bayston@lbcapital.com](mailto:dan.bayston@lbcapital.com), (312) 560-2124. A complete list of current donors and available giving levels may be found at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com).

## ACACIA



**Congratulations to Tim Weselak '94 and his wife Elizabeth who were married on the beach in Maui on Feb 14, 2009.**

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Do you have news you'd like to share with your brothers? Post interesting information about yourself online at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com). Did you recently get married? Have a baby? Change jobs? Retire? Let us know. Post your news today.



**Acacia Fraternity**  
 University of Illinois #695  
 PO Box 2187  
 Columbus, GA 31902-2187

Help us keep our alumni records up-to-date! Parents, please forward this newsletter to your son. Edit your member profile online at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), or clip this form, place it in a stamped envelope and send to: Acacia Fraternity #695, University of Illinois, P.O. Box 2187, Columbus, GA 31902.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

ACACIA  
 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

## Illinois Alumni: Facts...and Figures

In December of this past year, living Illinois alumni numbered 1,490. That's a lot of names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses to track. Obviously great reliance is placed on alumni keeping Acacia posted when their contact information changes. By updating your contact information at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com), you are updating your information with both Acacia Illinois and Acacia National – as changes are sent to the national office quarterly.

Major progress was made with the publication of the most recent Acacia Illinois Directory, spearheaded and developed by **Adam Powers '98** and distributed to all members by the Corporation Board. Time changes many things and tracking alumni is a formidable and on going task. Consider the following:

In 2008 alone, there were 567 alumni (38%) who had provided their e-mail addresses to date; there were a total of 3,338 information updates received, while a total

of 3,711 web site visits were made to the Acacia web site ([www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com)). Use of e-mails is one way we can help reduce communication costs while maintaining a good level of information flow.

Also in 2008, 11,867 different items were mailed to our members. This is up from 6,218 in 2007. An additional 4,293 items were e-mailed. Unfortunately, only 5 news items were received at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com) in the "Brother to Brother" section. That's a number that we are hoping will increase this year.

We are assisted in keeping track of this information through a company called Omega Financial, Inc. Omega has also assisted Acacia with the Capital Campaign and the publication of *The Hello*.

The information retrieved from Omega Financial is periodically shared and cross checked with data that has been accumulated and retained by Acacia National headquarters. It's a formidable endeavor but one that is made much easier

when alumni remember to keep fellow alums posted on their whereabouts through the system. We hope each of you will be a part of that effort.

Incidentally, if you do not receive periodic e-mails from Acacia, it is likely because we do not have your e-mail address. That can be easily corrected by updating your contact information at [www.AcaciaIllinois.com](http://www.AcaciaIllinois.com) or by forwarding your e-mail address to Ronnie Klein at Omega Financial via his e-mail, [rklein@omegafi.com](mailto:rklein@omegafi.com). Why not do it today?

### HOMECOMING 2009

**October 20  
 vs. MSU**

**Make plans and  
 hotel reservations  
 now!!**